

Press Release



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For Immediate Release, June 27, 2005

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Blue Moon Rising, Cedar Hill and Mike Dowling Headline The 15th Annual Missouri River Bluegrass Festival

Three nationally renowned bluegrass performers will headline this summer's Missouri River Bluegrass and Old Time Music Festival July 8-10. The 15th annual festival will be held at Cross Ranch State Park, located west of Washburn.

Headliner Blue Moon Rising, from Tennessee, is one of the most exciting bluegrass groups on the scene today. Not only do they write and perform original, well-crafted bluegrass songs, they play those songs with a sense of style and taste reminiscent of some pioneers of the genre. Formed in late 2000, their name honors 'The Father of Bluegrass Music' Bill Monroe and his legendary song, "Blue Moon of Kentucky".

Mike Dowling, from Wyoming, has a professional career that's spanned four decades. Firmly grounded in authenticity and possessed of a musical soul as old as the vintage instruments he favors, Mike draws inspiration from deep in the musical bag of American roots guitar styles. Influenced by traditional Piedmont style fingerpickers like Mississippi John Hurt and swing jazz legends like the great George Barnes, Mike's developed a style, uniquely his own, that he translates fluently to arch top, flat top and resonator guitars alike. From bottleneck blues on a well-worn National to elegant swing interpretations reminiscent of the great old jazz artists, Mike Dowling can do it all.

Cedar Hill, from Missouri, is an all-acoustic band made up of six accomplished musicians and singers who have stayed close to their Ozark Mountain roots. Originally formed in 1967 by Frank Ray and his uncle Richard Orchard, it was a genuine, soulful, emotion-packed music that could only be classified as "the real thing." Now, reformed with equally talented members, they are still the real thing.

Other featured artists, all from North Dakota, will be the Heart River Band, Chuck Suchy, The Charley Family, Brothers by Grace, the Center Community Band and the Pfliger Sisters. A special Lewis and Clark Bicentennial presentation by Native American Flutist, Matt Schanandore, will take place on Friday evening.

Play in our backyard!

The Bluegrass Festival and Children's Festival get underway on Friday evening, July 8, with main stage performances from 6:30-10:30 p.m. Saturday's main stage performances run from 1-10:30 p.m. On Sunday, gospel music will be featured from 1-6 p.m., with Blue Moon Rising closing the festival.

Bluegrass workshops and jam sessions will fill the remainder of the weekend. Activities include jam sessions for both beginners and seasoned performers who have attended the park's guitar and bluegrass camps, and hands-on workshops on learning bluegrass and gospel songs. A two-day bluegrass camp for adults will again precede the festival on July 6-7. For information on the bluegrass camp, call (701) 838-1061.

Children's Festival activities take place all three days with games, races, movies and more. Youngsters can sign up at the park's Visitor Center.

Costs for adults are \$10 Friday, \$16 Saturday, and \$12 on Sunday; \$24 for two consecutive days; or \$30 for all three days. Children 16 and under are admitted free.

Festival-goers are advised to bring along blankets, lawn chairs, bug spray, sunscreen, rain gear and a flashlight for the evening concerts. No alcohol, smoking or pets are allowed in the concert area and no audiotaping is permitted. Videotaping requires prior approval. An overflow camping area is available at the park, and food vendors and a shuttle service will be provided. The performances will be held rain or shine.

Sponsors include the Center ND Community Club, ND Parks & Recreation Department, Bluegrass & Old Time Music Association of North Dakota, Bill's Super Valu in Washburn, the Milk & Honey Market in Center, and the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center. This activity is sponsored in part by a grant from the North Dakota Council on the Arts, which receives funding from the State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Cross Ranch State Park is located on the west side of the Missouri River between Center and Washburn. Because of safety and dust problems, visitors are asked not to use any of the gravel roads, but to use either

Highway 83 or Highway 25, then follow the brown park directional signs. For more information, contact Cross Ranch State Park at (701) 794-3731.

Missouri River Bluegrass Festival Schedule

Friday, July 8

6:30 p.m. Heart River Band
7:30 p.m. Mike Dowling
8:30 p.m. Cedar Hill
9:30 p.m. Matt Schanandore

2:00 p.m. Brothers by Grace (gospel)
3:00 p.m. Heart River Band (gospel)
4:00 p.m. The Charley Family (gospel)
5:00 p.m. Blue Moon Rising (gospel)

Saturday, July 9

10:00 a.m. Open Stage
1:00 p.m. Center Community Band &
the Pfliger Sisters
2:30 p.m. Mike Dowling
3:30 p.m. Blue Moon Rising
4:30 p.m. Cedar Hill
5:30 p.m. Chuck Suchy
6:30 p.m. The Charley Family
7:30 p.m. Mike Dowling
8:30 p.m. Blue Moon Rising
9:30 p.m. Cedar Hill

Free Children's Festival Activities

Friday night, Saturday & Sunday.
Sign kids up in the Visitor Center

Sunday, July 10

10:00 a.m. Church Service
1:00 p.m. Blue Moon Rising (gospel)